

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05

IO-10 DHA-02 SY-05 SCCT-01 USSS-00 A-01 PC-01 /082 W

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R 031430Z SEP 75

FM AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6419

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAO PAULO 1815

E.O. 11652: XGDS4 DECLAS IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE

TAGS: SHUM, PINS, PGOV, BR

SUBJECT: CARDINAL ARNS DISCUSSES NEW HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND
PARALYZATION OF THE DISTENSAO PROCESS

1. TORTURE DEATH IN SAO PAULO: DURING DEPARTMENT POLITICAL
DESK OFFICER REGINA ELTZ AND CONGEN POLOFF'S COURTESY CALL ON
SAO PAULO CURIA AUGUST 28, CARDINAL PAULO EVARISTO ARNS DES-
CRIBED THE HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM IN BRAZIL AS A PROCESS SUBJECT
TO PERIODIC CYCLES OF RELATIVE IMPROVEMENT AND WORSENING. WE
WERE NOW DEFINITELY ON THE DOWN SIDE OF THE CYCLE. IN RECENT
WEEKS THERE HAD BEEN A RECURRENCE OF CASES OF BRUTAL TORTURE
IN CONNECTION WITH AN INVESTIGATION BY THE BRAZILIAN SECOND ARMY
INTO ALLEGED COMMUNIST INFILTRATION OF THE SAO PAULO STATE
POLICE MILITIA (PMS), AN OUTGROWTH OF THE DISCOVERY OF PCB
PRINTING PRESSES IN EARLY 1975. INTERROGATIONS OF PRISONERS THUS
FAR HAD RESULTED IN ONE FATALITY, THAT OF A RETIRED PM OFFICER
IN HIS SIXTIES. THE FAMILIES OF THE IMPRISONED PMS, INCLUDING
THAT OF THE DECEASED OFFICER, HAD BEEN GIVEN A "FRIENDLY WARNING"
NOT TO CREATE ANY COMMOTION OVER THE ISSUE, LEST SOMETHING
UNTOWARD OCCUR TO THE NEXT-OF-KIN. THERE ALSO WERE REPORTS
THAT SOME OF THE POLITICAL PRISONERS HAD "DISAPPEARED", I.E.,
REMOVED FROM THEIR PLACES OF CONFINEMENT TO UNKNOWN LOCATIONS.
IT WAS PREMATURE TO MAKE A JUDGMENT AS TO THEIR WHEREABOUTS.

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AS NONE OF THE WIVES HAD FOLLOWED UP THEIR ORIGINAL DENUNCIATION

OF "DISAPPEARANCES" WITH FURTHER VISITS TO THE CURIA, HOPEFULLY THIS WAS A SIGN THAT THE MISSING MEN HAD BEEN RELEASED AND RETURNED TO THEIR HOMES. THE CARDINAL RECALLED THAT DURING THE SHORTLIVED THERMIDOR LAST YEAR, GENERAL GOLBERY HAD TOLD HIM, IRONICALLY, THAT IT WAS A MATTER OF ENLIGHTENED SELF-INTEREST FOR THE REGIME TO PUT AN END TO TORTURE; IF THE PRACTICE WERE NOT STOPPED THERE WAS NO TELLING WHERE IT WOULD LEAD. SOONER OR LATER ARMY OFFICERS WOULD FIND THEMSELVES BEING PLACED ON THE RACKS--AND THAT WOULD BE A DISASTER FOR THE REVOLUTION. WELL, MUSED THE CARDINAL, THAT DAY MAY HAVE ARRIVED.

2. THE POLITICAL DIMENSION: AT THE CARDINAL'S DIRECTION, DOCUMENTATION RELATING TO THE RECENT TORTURE CASES IN SAO PAULO HAD BEEN DESPATCHED TO GENERAL GOLBERY BY SPECIAL MESSENGER. GOLBERY'S RESPONSE WAS LIMITED TO A WRINGING OF HANDS AND EXPRESSIONS OF REGRET. MORE HE COULD NOT DO UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. PRESIDENT GEISEL'S AUGUST 1 MESSAGE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE PRESIDENT AND GOLBERY WERE UNDERGOING TREMENDOUS PRESSURES FROM THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT, PRESSURES WHICH THE CARDINAL THOUGHT THEY WOULD BE UNABLE TO OVERCOME. THE OVERALL SITUATION AND PROSPECTS COULD BE DESCRIBED ONLY AS BLEAK. ALL THE CHURCH COULD HOPE TO DO WAS TO TRY TO LIMIT THE DAMAGE. AS HORRIBLE AS IT WAS TO CONTEMPLATE, TORTURE WAS NOT THE MAIN PROBLEM. POVERTY AND WORKER'S DECLINING PURCHASING POWER WERE GREATER CONCERNS. BUT THE CRUCIAL, LINCHPIN ISSUE WAS THE ABSENCE OF THE RULE OF LAW IN BRAZIL. WHILE HE DOUBTED THE SITUATION WOULD IMPROVE, HE COULD NOT PREDICT WHAT THE FUTURE HELD IN STORE. IF THE 1976 AND 1978 ELECTIONS WERE HELD AS SCHEDULED, LAST YEAR'S OPPOSITION PARTY VICTORIES WOULD BE SEVERAL TIMES MAGNIFIED. BEYOND THAT HE COULD NOT SAY.

3. THE CARDINAL ASKS FOR AN EMBARGO ON BRAZILIAN TRADE: EXPRESSING THIS AGREEMENT WITH RETIRED SUPREME COURT JUSTICE ALIOMAR BALEEIRO'S RECENTLY PUBLISHED VIEW THAT BOTH EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL PRESSURES WERE NECESSARY TO BRING ABOUT A RETURN TO THE RULE OF LAW IN BRAZIL, THE CARDINAL, WITH A FLASH OF EMOTION, IMploRED THE US AND OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES TO EMBARGO FURTHER TRADE WITH BRAZIL UNTIL BRAZIL LIVED UP TO ITS INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATION TO RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS. HE QUICKLY RECOVERED, HOWEVER, AND RESPONDED TO HIS OWN POINT BY STATING CONFIDENTIAL

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THAT HE RECOGNIZED SUCH FOREIGN ACTION WOULD PRODUCE NEGATIVE, COUNTERPRODUCTIVE RESULTS IN BRAZIL. NEVERTHELESS, HE THOUGHT THAT THERE WERE SALUTARY EFFECTS TO BE HAD FROM THE INTERNATIONAL SPOTLIGHT ON BRAZIL. THE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORTS IDENTIFYING SOME OF THE TORTURERS HAD PRODUCED REMARKABLE CHANGES IN SOME OF THESE MEN. SOME NO LONGER WANTED TO HAVE ANY FURTHER PART IN THIS KIND OF WORK.

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6420

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SAO PAULO 1815

4. SAO PAULO BISHOPS' PROTEST: IN RESPONSE TO OUR REQUEST, THE CARDINAL HANDED US A COPY OF A COMMUNIQUE WHICH HAD BEEN ALLUDED TO IN THE PREVIOUS WEEKEND'S SERMONS OF AT LEAST SOME OF THE PARISHES OF THE ARCHDIOCESE. THE COMMUNIQUE HAD BEEN RELEASED AS A SPECIAL BULLETIN SEPARATELY BY THE REGIONAL BISHOPS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE UNDER THE LETTERHEAD OF THEIR RESPECTIVE GEOGRAPHIC SUBDIVISIONS, ALTHOUGH OBVIOUSLY WITH THE CARDINAL'S CONSENT. DATED AUGUST 20, THE COMMUNIQUE WAS ENTITLED "OUR HOPES AND APPREHENSIONS". DECLARING IT THE CHURCH'S MORAL OBLIGATION TO REFLECT AND COMMENT UPON THE RECENT PM ARRESTS, "ESPECIALLY SINCE THEY HAD BEEN ACCOMPANIED BY DISRESPECT FOR THE LAW AND FOR HUMAN DIGNITY, WHICH ALWAYS OCCURRED WHEN THE PERIOD OF INCOMMUNICABILITY HAD BEEN PRO- ONGED, OBSTANCES HAD BEEN PLACED IN THE WAY OF PREPARING THE DEFENSE AND TORTURE HAD BEEN APPLIED. "THE COMMUNIQUE WENT ON TO DESCRIBE IN BITTER TERMS THE DEATH OF PM RESERVE 2D LT. JOSE FERREIRA DE ALMEIDA, AGED 63, WHO WAS DIRECTOR OF INACTIVE RESERVE PM OFFICER'S CLUBS IN SAO PAULO. ACCORDING TO THE COMMUNIQUE, FERREIRA DE ALMEIDA WAS ARRESTED ON JULY 7 BY AGENTS OF THE DOI/CODI DETACHMENT OF THE SECOND ARMY, (FORMERLY KNOWN AS "OPERACAO BANDEIRANTES"). HE WAS ALLOWED CONTACT WITH HIS FAMILY ON JULY 24 AND WITH HIS LAWYER ON JULY 30 AT DEOPS (STATE POLITICAL POLICE), AFTER WHICH HE WAS RETURNED TO DOI. ON AUGUST 9 THE FAMILY WAS INFORMED THAT HE

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HAD COMMITTED "SUICIDE" WHILE UNDER CAPTIVITY AT DOI. ACCORDING TO DOCUMENTED INFORMATION COMMUNICATED BY THE SECURITY AUTHORITIES TO THE APPROPRIATE MILITARY JUDICIAL AUTHORITY, ALMEIDA HAD SUFFERED FROM DUODENAL ULCERS. THE DEATH CERTIFICATE LISTED THE CAUSE OF DEATH AS "SUICIDE BY ASPHYXIA; THE TIME OF DEATH WAS UNKNOWN." DURING HIS JULY 30 CONFERENCE WITH HIS LAWYER AT DEOPS ALMEIDA COMPLAINED OF INTERMITTENT HEADACHES CAUSED BY HAVING BEEN BEATEN HARD AND KICKED IN THE HEAD AND HAVING BEEN SUBJECTED TO ELECTRIC SHOCK TREATMENT. "THEY PULLED A BRIDGE OUT OF HIS MOUTH AND PROMISED TO RETURN IT TO HIM WHEN HE WAS DEAD, "THE COMMUNIQUE CONTINUES IN A SARCASTIC TONE. "THEY KEPT THEIR PROMISE. BY THE TIME HE WAS BURIED, THE BRIDGE ACTUALLY HAD BEEN REPLACED."

5. PM ARRESTS REPORTED TO THE GOVERNOR: ACCORDING TO THE BISHOPS' COMMUNIQUE, THE CARDINAL RECEIVED REPORTS OF MORE THAN FIFTY PM ARRESTS AND HE IN TURN HANDED OVER THE NAMES OF THE DETAINEES TO GOVERNOR PAULO EGYDIO MARTINS ON JULY 24. WE HAVE HEARD INDEPENDENT ESTIMATES THAT AS MANY AS 80 PMS MAY HAVE BEEN DETAINED. THE CARDINAL ALSO TOLD US THAT ALL OF THE PM CASES OF TORTURE TOOK PLACE AT DOI. TO THE BEST OF HIS KNOWLEDGE, THE PRACTICE HAD CEASED AT DEOPS SINCE PAULO EGYDIO'S ACCESSION TO THE GOVERNORSHIP. (COMMENT: WE HAVE HEARD CONFLICTING TESTIMONY AS TO WHETHER THESE ABUSES HAVE ENDED AT DEOPS). THE CARDINAL ALSO STATED THAT HE HAD REFUSED TO HAVE ANY FURTHER DEALINGS WITH SECOND ARMY COMMANDER, GENERAL EDNARDO D'AVILA MELO, SINCE THE CURRENT ROUND OF ARRESTS AND TORTURES HAD BEGUN.

6. REPORT OF ARMY ARRESTS: THE CARDINAL ALSO RECEIVED REPORTS THAT SECOND ARMY OFFICERS ARE UNDER ARREST IN SAO PAULO ON POLITICAL CHARGES. AS OF OUR MEETING AUGUST 28 HE WAS UNCERTAIN WHETHER THE REPORTED DETENTION OF THESE OFFICERS WAS LINKED TO THE PM CASES. (COMMENT: OTHER SOURCES IN SAO PAULO HAVE ALLUDED TO RECENT ARRESTS OF SECOND ARMY OFFICERS, BUT WE HAVE NO SOLID INFORMATION WITH RESPECT TO THIS LEAD OR TO ITS SIGNIFICANCE. NEITHER THE PM NOR THE ARMY ARRESTS HAVE BEEN REPORTED IN THE PRESS, TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE. THE SEPTEMBER 1975 ISSUE OF THE IRREGULARLY PUBLISHED "EX" (EX-14) CARRIES A PHOTO OF CARDINAL ARNS ON ITS FRONT PAGE ACCOMPANIED BY A HEADLINE WHICH READS

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"DOCUMENT: WITH DOM PAULO'S MESSAGE", FOLLOWED BY A NOTE ADVISING THAT FOR REASONS OF FORCE MAJEURE IT WAS NOT

POSSIBLE TO PUBLISH THE CORRESPONDING STORY.)

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Message Attributes

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